

Gorbachev Pressing Lithuanians To Shun Any Self-Defense Plans

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MOSCOW, March 22 — President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's campaign of psychological pressure on Lithuania intensified today as he demanded that the Vilnius government end any plans for a self-defense system and ordered the K.G.B. to reinforce Soviet border posts.

The Kremlin, continuing to flood state-controlled news outlets with a mood of heightening crisis, announced that the Soviet leader had sent a protest to Lithuanian officials over their continuing steps to carry out their declaration of independence from Soviet authority, made 11 days ago.

"Please report fulfillment within two days," Mr. Gorbachev directed in a telegram to President Vytautas Landsbergis, referring to unclear reports of plans for a volunteer defense system.

The Lithuanian authorities, however, again insisted that Mr. Gorbachev had no power to issue such directives to them and that his increase of the psychological stakes would not sway them from independence.

Local Authority Furthered

They went ahead with various local authority measures, including passage of a law to take tighter control of Lithuanian radio and television.

The latest Kremlin directive said posts "along the state border passing across the territory of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic" had been reinforced. There were no details on precisely how the normal contingent of border guards might have been strengthened in numbers or methods.

Mr. Gorbachev's two days of orders, while clearly intensifying the emotional intensity of the confrontation, have nevertheless stopped short of overt confrontation in the republic.

The heightening of the campaign of pressure was clear as the main part of the primary Soviet evening television news program was taken up with Kremlin-generated directives and protests over Lithuania.

Late tonight, Moscow television showed old documentaries that presented a self-congratulatory Soviet history of Lithuania, omitting any mention of its forced annexation in 1940 and depicting Soviet troops as champions over German invaders.

In a touch reminiscent of the glasnost days of tightly marshalled announcements, the Soviet press gravely

reported a warning from the state-run federal prosecutors' collegium that their "colleagues in Lithuania" were failing to uphold the law and protect citizens's rights in the republic.

Tass, the Soviet press agency, said "measures are being taken" to confiscate weapons from organizations and the population in Lithuania and also to restrict the movement of foreigners in the republic. These were the main points of Mr. Gorbachev's special executive order Wednesday.

Sajudis Is Blamed

In his latest directive, the President focused on the fact that Sajudis, the Lithuanian separatist umbrella group, had put up circulars inviting volunteers to sign up for a future "territorial defense system."

The volunteer plan was not otherwise specified, but Mr. Gorbachev said in his telegram to Vilnius that these volunteers were being "called upon to replace" Soviet border troops and even some internal police authorities.

"I suggest that urgent measures be taken to stop all actions at creating these and similar units," he said to President Landsbergis.

The increased Soviet press coverage underlining the sense of crisis over Lithuania again omitted the fact that there have been no instances of violence in the two-year-old separatist campaign in the republic. The press coverage has been sympathetic toward the republic's non-Lithuanian, largely Russian minority while skimping on the history of forced Soviet annexation by Stalin in 1940 and the subsequent mass exiles of Lithuanians to Siberia.

Tass, in reporting on the prosecutors' collegium, said additional prosecutors had been sent from Moscow to Lithuania, but it did not say whether the intention was to replace Lithuanian prosecutors now in office.

"We want to solve the problem as peacefully as possible," said Gennadi Gerasimov, the Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman. He said resistance by Lithuanian officials to Mr. Gorbachev would mean "an escalation of tension that is good for nobody."

Mr. Gorbachev is hurrying a new secession law through Parliament that would permit a republic's independence only after an elaborate process of referendum, negotiations and final con



Associated Press

A roadside sign that once identified Lithuania as a Soviet republic was changed to read simply "Lithuania," in Lithuanian, at a border point

between Lithuania and the Byelorussian republic. The change followed Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.